

MESSAGES AND ISSUES FOR SOUL CITY 2

HIV/AIDS

The overall goals of the AIDS message are:

- * To make AIDS an open issue
- * To address the stigma which is attached to AIDS
- * To get people to feel compassion for people who have AIDS or who are HIV positive
- * To dispel myths and misconceptions about AIDS especially those about infection through casual contact.

Messages 1-5 have equal importance:

1. Anyone can get HIV/AIDS

Anyone who is sexually active is at risk of contracting HIV. The feeling of personal susceptibility is an important step on the road towards behaviour change. People who don't see themselves as promiscuous, as sex workers, homosexuals or any other high risk groups, don't think they are at risk. This especially applies to women who are married and whose husbands have the occasional affair, but also applies to people who are serially monogamous.

2. Care for and support HIV positive people

- people with AIDS are not blameworthy
- like another people they have hopes, fears and needs
- discrimination results from ignorance and is uncool
- HIV is not casually contagious (one can have an intimate relationship if one is HIV positive)

The message is that HIV/AIDS is a disease and people should not be blamed for contracting it. Although people who are infected often have heightened fears and needs they are human and we need to empathise with them. Barriers to this empathy often results from ignorance about HIV

3. There are ways of living positively with AIDS

AIDS is a disease with a long period of wellness. It is important to show people who manage to live positively and to have success in their lives even though they are HIV positive.

4. Condoms can and do prevent the spread of HIV

Our major preventive mechanism against the spread of HIV and other STD's is through the use of condoms

5. STD's should be treated

Other sexually transmitted diseases make one more vulnerable to HIV, therefore to help decrease the spread of HIV it is important for people to go for treatment of STD's.

6. People with AIDS have rights

Many rights of people who are HIV positive are violated these relate to issues such as refusal to give insurance coverage, to dismissal from work etc. This violation is not acceptable .

AIDS Background Document

- * 1,2 million people in South Africa are infected with the HIV
- * HIV/AIDS has the potential to infect and ultimately kill up to 30% of the adult, economically productive population
- * Already 10% of women attending ante natal clinics in KwaZulu/Natal are infected
- * In Tuberculosis clinics almost 40% of people are infected
- * In STD clinics in Johannesburg 32% of women attending are positive.

AIDS has not yet become visible in South Africa, but with the large numbers of HIV infected people soon people will start becoming sick and almost everyone will know someone who has AIDS.

HIV/AIDS is spread by the exchange of body fluids, in South Africa by far the most common mode of spread is through heterosexual sex. The second most common is from a pregnant woman to her child - there is up to a 40% chance of this happening.

Youth

The aims of the messages are:

- * To give back control to young people over their lives
- * To reinforce the already existing coping mechanisms and qualities which help resistance
- * To open lines of communication between peers and parents and youth

1. Sex should be a decision which is made when the person is able to make an informed decision. You can control it.

This is contributing to delaying onset of sex, and empowering girls. It encourages youth control and reinforces positive peer pressure. Skills are necessary to assist this - life skills and coping mechanisms to negotiate around sex. Knowledge about sex, contraception etc. is also important.

2. Sex should be talked about more openly between the genders and generations

*This fosters better understanding between males and females. Encourages parental guidance.
Addresses myths and misinformation.*

3. Love is not equal to sex

Many young people feel pressured into sex through the common equation of love and sex. They are often blackmailed into entering a sexual relationship when they are not ready.

Developmentally adolescence is a period of rapid and significant change for the individual. Thus young people are at increased risk for a variety of problem behaviours. Adolescence is also a time when behaviour patterns are begun and established in many spheres of life. There are particular learning tasks which must be accomplished during this period: Establishing an identity, entering into intimate relationships and interacting socially.

There are many health issues facing young people:

1. Mental health - the successful passage into adulthood
2. The temptation to use and abuse substances - tobacco and alcohol being the commonest
3. The initiation into sexuality and the threats of sexually transmitted diseases especially the HIV, pregnancy, violence in sexual relations especially rape
4. Violence - learning peaceful means of conflict resolution in all spheres of life

Tobacco use among adolescents

- * Nearly all first use of tobacco occurs by the age of 18.
- * Most adolescent smokers are addicted to nicotine.
- * Tobacco is often the first drug used by young people who subsequently abuse illegal drugs.
- * Cigarette advertising appears to increase the risk of young people smoking
- * Adolescents with lower levels of school achievement, fewer skills to resist pervasive influences to use tobacco, friends who use tobacco, and lower self-images are more likely than their peers to use tobacco
- * Community-wide efforts have successfully reduced adolescent use of tobacco these have been campaigns around the sale of tobacco to young people as well as around the selling and marketing of cigarettes to particular communities (the Black American community)

The reality is that young people are sexually active and that they often face the consequences of unwanted pregnancies.

21% of legal abortions are performed on women between 10 and 19 years old
40% of operations resulting from illegal abortions were on girls between 15 and 19 years.

They also face STD's South Africa has very high rates, one indicator of this is the very high infertility rate which follows often silent STD's in women.

Our research shows that there are misconceptions from both genders about what the other is after. Girls think that boys want slim girls and that if they do not engage in sex that they will be beaten or dumped. Boys on the other hand believe that girls want cars and money, and if they do not try to have sex they will be accused of not loving the girl and won't be seen as a man.

Both want more information about sex. Girls are afraid of sex.

TUBERCULOSIS MESSAGE

The main messages about Tuberculosis are:

Messages 1 to 4 are of equal importance

1. TB Treatment works and makes you non infectious

It is clear that with treatment people can be cured of TB.

2. You need a full course of treatment even if you are feeling better to cure and prevent recurrence

Very often people on treatment start feeling better after a few weeks of treatment. A critical time period for people on treatment is two months, people are tempted to stop treatment because to all intents and purposes they are better BUT you need the full 6 months course to completely wipe out all the bacteria and be cured. If you don't complete the treatment you may have a recurrence of the illness, in addition incomplete treatment can cause drug resistance making the treatment more difficult in the future.

3. Anyone can get TB it does not mean you are a bad person

The overall aim is to reduce the stigma associated with TB. Anyone can be infected with TB, though in some people's minds it has come to be associated with poverty, dirt and alcohol.

4. Communities can mobilise to improve SE conditions - housing /employment/nutrition

This will have a positive impact on health and in combination with high cure rates will help eradicate TB.

5. People with TB can and do work

Even though people who have TB can get very sick, many others after the initial period of treatment are fully capable of working, and are not a danger in any way to their co-workers.

6. People with TB need support

They need support in terms of help to persevere in finishing their treatment, and acceptance in emotional terms to enable them to continue to lead productive and happy lives.

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO) Tuberculosis will kill 30 million people this decade. It is the leading infectious killer in adults and causes 26% of avoidable adult deaths in the developing world, and causes more adult deaths than any other disease including AIDS and Malaria. In 1993 the WHO declared Tuberculosis a global emergency.

There is one person dying from TB every 40 minutes in SA
In South Africa the rates of TB vary around the country but in the Western Cape we have among the highest rates in the world - 900 out of every 100 000 people have TB, Western countries have rates of about 20/ 100 000 with the rest of SA having rates of about 400/100 000. Nobody is quite sure what the cause of the incredibly high rates in the Western Cape but there is some suspicion that the association of TB with alcohol and cigarette smoking may play a role - the Western Cape also has the highest smoking rates and alcohol abuse rates - "coloured" women have the highest smoking rates for women in the world.

Don't start smoking, once you start it is difficult to stop.
You are being duped into smoking

*Smoking is not cool
Smoking interferes with sports and decreases performance
Smoking doesn't increase your independence, it enslaves you.*

COMMUNITY ACTION MESSAGES:

There should be community support for the ban on sales to people under 16 years.

Adults can and do play a definite role in the access that young people have to cigarettes.

Smoking should be restricted in public places.

Non smokers have a right to clean air

ADULT MESSAGE:

Giving up smoking is both beneficial and possible

Most people who smoke want to give up

If you give up smoking it will improve your quality of life, through decreasing your chances of debilitating illnesses. It will also prolong your life.

If you give up it will prevent passive smoking which is especially damaging to children's respiratory health.

*If you give up smoking it saves you money.
Smokers giving up need support from their family and friends*

UNDERLYING TRUTH TO CONTEXTUALISE THE MESSAGES:

The tobacco industry is making money selling and promoting tobacco which is known to cause massive amounts of death and disease.

You are being duped into smoking by the tobacco industry through marketing and promotion We've won a liberation battle, don't let yourself be exploited again.

Smoking is very definitely harmful to your health.

Smoking doesn't increase your independence - in fact it creates dependence, it is a strong addiction.

- Smoking significantly reduces life expectancy.
- By the year 2020 tobacco will have caused more deaths in the Third World than both AIDS and maternal deaths.
- Smoking kills more people in Western countries than drugs, alcohol and Aids. For every one American killed by heroin and cocaine, 42 are killed by cigarettes.
- 7 million adult South Africans (1 in 3) smoke cigarettes (34%)
- 52% of men and 17% of women smoke in South Africa
- Most people start to smoke in their teens with the age of initiation getting lower in some countries.
- Tobacco related disease costs countries literally billions of dollars. In 1990, a total of 7 million tons of tobacco were consumed world-wide. This represents a net global economic loss (in terms of premature death, sick time and direct medical costs) of almost 400 billion us dollars of which about a third to a half occurred in the developing world.

The Tobacco Industry makes profits out of death and disease

As smoking decreases in one particular group, the tobacco industry is constantly on the lookout for new markets. There is considerable literature which looks at the way the industry is targeting women and youth, particularly in the Third World, as major untapped markets.

Tobacco consumption provides a nett economic loss and anti-tobacco policies are cost effective, save lives and benefit the economy. Anti-tobacco lobbyists are translating this into RDP terms, indicating that a commitment to the RDP is not

compatible with any policy that encourages continued development and expansion of the tobacco industry in South Africa.

25 000 South Africans die each year from smoking related diseases.

Smoking causes the following:

- Lung cancer (95% of deaths are directly due to smoking)
- Cancer of the mouth, oesophagus (windpipe), bladder, pancreas and cervix
- Heart disease including strokes (smoking causes 25% of all deaths due to heart disease)
- Blood vessel disease resulting in limb amputations
- Respiratory diseases (chronic bronchitis, emphysema)
- Intestinal ulcers

Smoking during pregnancy increases the risk of:

- Retarding the growth of the foetus
- Premature delivery
- Abortion
- Sudden Infant Death Syndrome

Smoking is also increases the risk of:

- Bone disease in women
- Early onset of menopause
- Infertility and impotence
- A range of minor illnesses: coughs; sinus; loss of fitness, poor breathing, wrinkling.

Passive smoking causes:

- **Lung cancer**
- **Heart and lung disease**
- **Exacerbates asthma**

Smoking affects the environment by causing:

- Pollution and litter
- Fire hazard.